

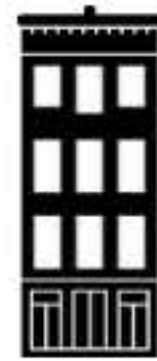
— ANNE FRANK IN - THE SECRET ANNEXE — WHO WAS WHO?



anne frank house

ANNE FRANK IN THE SECRET ANNEXE WHO WAS WHO?

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Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?

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On most tablets you can enlarge photographs by tapping on them or by 'pinching' them with your fingers. The list of contents, the photo gallery at the start of the book and all grey texts are clickable.

[numeral] sources

FOREWORD

During the Second World War, in what is now known as the Secret Annexe, located in Amsterdam at the *Prinsengracht* 263, eight Jews remained in hiding for just over two years: Otto, Edith, Margo and Anne Frank, Hermann, Auguste and Peter van Pels, and Fritz Pfeffer. They were helped by five people for whom it was self-evident to take on this dangerous task: Johannes Kleiman, Victor Kugler, Bep Voskuijl and Miep and Jan Gies.

In her diary, Anne Frank gave a face to the eight people hiding in the Secret Annexe and their five helpers; between July 1942 and August 1944 she lived through two intense years with them. Her youthful outlook and the circumstances of the war era strongly coloured the portraits she created. Anne gave all of her subjects pseudonyms in her diary, except for her parents and sister.

But who were these people really, where did they come from? How were their daily lives during the occupation? What did these people in hiding eat, what did they do all day? And how did their helpers manage to feed eight extra mouths while carrying out their duties at the office,

without their activities being noticed? Did they stay in contact after the war?

For the first time, this book outlines the lives of those in hiding and their helpers, both during and after their time in the Secret Annexe, in thirteen personal portraits.

There were also others active in and around the *Prinsengracht 263*, such as warehouse employees, suppliers and representatives. To date their roles have never been described.

For many years, the Anne Frank Foundation has researched everyone involved. This publication includes the latest insights discovered, as well as many new photographs. We hope that this e-book will form a valuable addition to the existing literature about Anne Frank and the Secret Annexe.

Ronald Leopold

Executive Director, Anne Frank House

THE PEOPLE IN HIDING

OTTO FRANK

The father of Margot and Anne, owner of Opekta, founder of Pectacon and Gies & Co. Key figure in the family going into hiding and the only person who hid in the Secret Annexe to survive the war.



EDITH FRANK

The mother of Margot and Anne, from a rich German family. When the Franks are in hiding, her daughters are her greatest worry.



MARGOT FRANK

Anne's sister, and a very promising young woman. Margot has many friends, loves sports and is a good student.



ANNE FRANK

Famous because of her diary. She has just turned thirteen when she goes into hiding, and is a teenager with considerable self-awareness and writing talent.



Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?

HERMANN VAN PELS

A Dutch citizen born in Germany.
Employed by Otto Frank and an expert
in herbs and spices.



AUGUSTE VAN PELS

An elegant German lady, married to
Hermann, mother of Peter. Her family
goes into hiding a week after the Franks
take refuge in the Secret Annexe.



PETER VAN PELS

The son of Hermann and Auguste, is
good with his hands and studying to be
a professional technician. He brings his
cat to the Secret Annexe.



FRITZ PFEFFER

Miep Gies' dentist and an acquaintance
of the Frank and Van Pels families.
Originally from Berlin, he is the last to
join the people hiding in the Secret
Annexe.



THE HELPERS

JOHANNES KLEIMAN

A businessman to the core, and friend and business partner to Otto Frank. He suggests the annexe as a possible hiding place.



VICTOR KUGLER

Born in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, fought in the First World War. Moves to the Netherlands and is employed by Otto Frank. He enjoys photography and comes up with the idea of a revolving bookcase.



BEP VOSKUIJL

The eldest of a large Amsterdam family. Employed by Otto Frank, in his administrative department. She is the youngest of the helpers and does the daily groceries for the people hiding in the Secret Annexe.



MIEP GIES

An Austrian girl who comes to live in the Netherlands. She does all kinds of office work for Otto Frank and helps the hiders by acquiring books and food for them. After the war, Otto Frank lives with the Gies family for seven years.



Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?

JAN GIES

Miep's husband, who works for Amsterdam city council. He is in the resistance and helps the eight people hiding in the Secret Annexe with, among other things, ration coupons.



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Flight to the Netherlands – A hard-working and clever student

In hiding – Eight together yet all alone

After discovery – Westerbork, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen

ANNE FRANK

Background – A cheeky little toddler

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In hiding – The dream of being a famous writer

After discovery – A lonely death

HERMANN VAN PELS

Background – Dutch nationality

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In hiding – Shortage of funds

After discovery – A fatal injury

AUGUSTE VAN PELS

Background – Coquettish and elegant

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In hiding – Keeping things lively

After discovery – A brutal death

PETER VAN PELS

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DAILY LIFE IN THE SECRET ANNEXE

Daily routine

—

It's a quarter to seven. The alarm clock goes off in the Secret Annexe. The eight occupants get up and get washed before the warehouse workers arrive at half past eight. After that they must keep all noise to a minimum. They walk in slippers, avoid the creaking stairs and don't use any running water. Coughing, sneezing, laughing, talking or quarrelling is absolutely forbidden. To kill time, the eight mainly spend the morning reading and studying. Some do needlework, others prepare the next meal. In the office on the first floor the helpers are at work. Miep takes time to pick up the shopping list from the Secret Annexe.

'It's twelve-thirty. The whole gang breathes a sigh of relief'^[1], Anne writes. At noontime the warehouse workers go home to eat and the Annexe occupants can relax a little. The helpers from the office usually drop in, and Jan Gies sometimes joins them. At one o'clock they all listen to the BBC on the illegal 'little baby radio'^[2], followed by lunch. After the lunch break the helpers go

back downstairs and most of the occupants take naps. Anne often uses this time to write in her diary. Silence prevails for the rest of the afternoon: potatoes are peeled, quiet chores are done for the office and the reading and studying continue. The helpers go on with their office work. Miep and Bep slip out during the afternoon or after office hours to work their way through the shopping list: food, clothing, soap and sometimes birthday presents.

When the warehouse workers leave at around half past five, Bep gives the occupants a sign. Each of the helpers returns to his or her own spouse or family and the Secret Annexe comes to life: someone grabs the warehouse key and fetches the bread, typewriters are carried upstairs, potatoes are set to boil, the cat door in the coal store is opened for Peter's cat Mouschi. Each has his or her own task. After dinner they sometimes play a game. At around nine o'clock the occupants get their sleeping arrangements ready, with much shuffling of chairs and foldaway beds. They take turns going to the bathroom. Anne, being the youngest, goes first. Fritz stays up late studying Spanish in the office downstairs. By about midnight the whole Secret Annexe is fast asleep.

On Saturday morning the warehouse workers put in half a day's work, but on Saturday afternoon and Sunday the Annexe occupants take time for a full sponge bath in

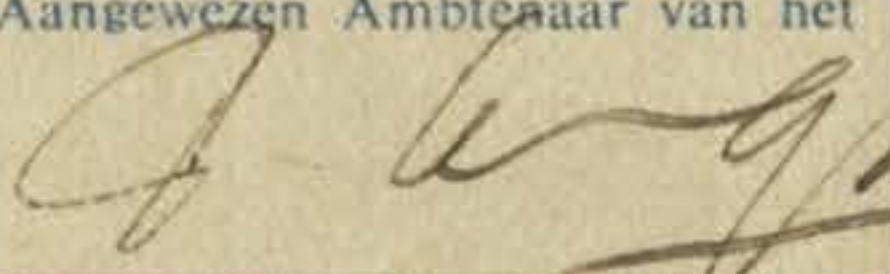
a basin, each in his own favourite spot in the building. The laundry is done then too, and the Secret Annexe is cleaned. There are businesses located in the two adjacent buildings, so when the weekends come the occupants don't have to be quite so cautious. But the curtains must always remain closed.

Food and distribution

—

Before going into hiding, the Annexe occupants stocked up on a great many supplies including rice, jam, flour, tea, coffee and about a hundred tins of food, as well as soap and other household products. After a few months 130 kilos of dried legumes are added to the store. As Peter is heaving each of the heavy bags up to the attic, one of them suddenly splits open and a torrent of brown beans comes cascading down the stairs. It takes weeks before the last beans are found: they're in every hook and cranny of the stairwell.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?

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JAN GIES' RATION REGISTRATION CARD.

Because of the threat of food shortages, the Dutch government began to regulate the food supply even before the Nazi invasion by means of ration registration cards and ration coupons. The occupiers decided to continue using this system. Everyone listed in the municipal register was required to appear in person at

their town hall to pick up a registration card. They could then go to a rationing office (or have someone else go for them), where ration coupons could be obtained on presentation of this card. By showing the registration cards of the Franks and Pfeffer, Miep and Bep are able to obtain ration coupons to buy certain provisions and other rationed products, such as soap. But because the Van Pels family have not been listed in the municipal register since December 1942, they have no registration card and therefore no coupons. They have to buy everything on the black market, which is much more expensive. The two families maintain separate household account books: they do eat together, but after a while they divide up the oil ration, for example, and count out the potatoes per person.

Sometimes there's nothing to be had but endive, spinach or sauerkraut, and the Annexe occupants eat the same thing for weeks on end. For a while potatoes constitute the basis of almost every meal, even breakfast when there's no bread. In May 1944, Anne writes with her typical sense of humour: 'Vegetables are still very hard to come by. This afternoon we had rotten boiled lettuce.[...] Add to that rotten potatoes, and you have a meal fit for a king!'^[3]

Contact with the outside world

Cut off from the world as they are, the people in hiding attach great importance to all incoming news. So whenever the helpers come to visit, they hang on their every word. Victor Kugler frequently shows up with newspapers and weeklies such as the *Haagsche Post* and *Das Reich*. Every scrap of information is turned inside out and discussed over and over again. After only five months, Anne writes: 'Our thoughts are subject to as little change as we are'.^[4]

Through Miep, Fritz Pfeffer corresponds regularly with his beloved Charlotte, who also lives in Amsterdam, but does not know that Fritz is hiding nearby. He also receives letters and treats from her.

15/xi. 1942. Munkblom - Fritz

Mein einzige Innigstgeliebte!

Dir sollst mein Morgenrösch von mir pflegen.
Mir fällt es diesmal so schwer dir zu schreiben,
da wir alles täglich besprechen konnten.
Und doch heißt mich mein Herz dazu, da es
so voll Stolz für dich, meine vom Herzen Geliebte,
ist. Ich bewunderte alle Zeit deine so kaffers,
stille Größe und deinen Adel, mit dem du
diese unbeschreiblich schwere Last meistest.
Mein Stolz besteht in meiner ganzen Hingabe
für dich in meinem Streben, dir und denen,
mit deiner Liebe würdig zu zeigen.
Was bedeutet diese hoffentlich erst kurze Unterbrechung
in dem ewig unzerstörbaren Band?
Habe weiter keinen herrlichen Mut, dein Gottvertrauen
und deine Liebe wird mich mir aus stärken und
tappen fallen. In diesem Sinne immer mit dir
Küßt dich innigst dein Fritz

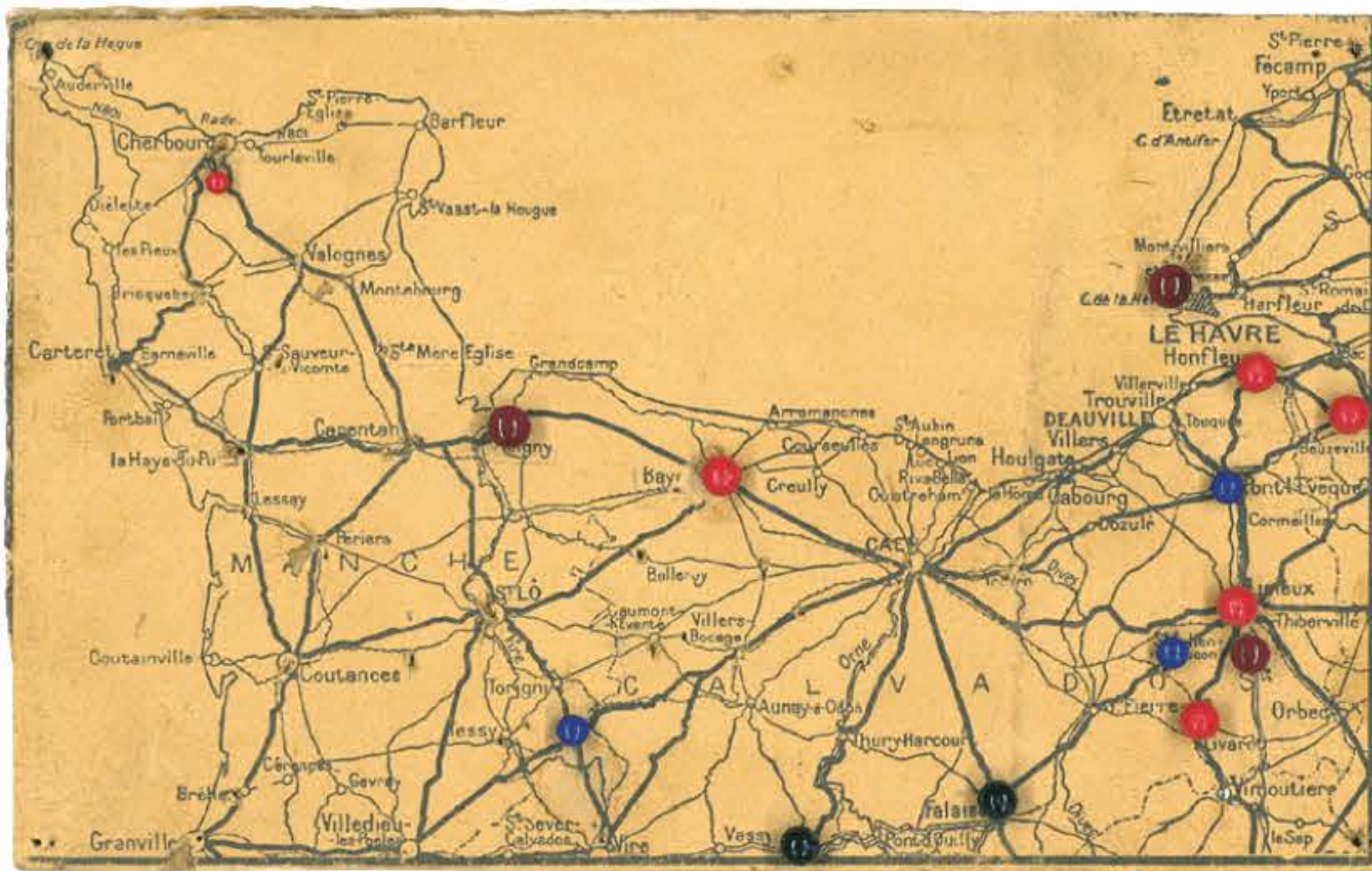
Von diesen Liebesbriefen, die ich so
lange für dich bewahrte, raube täglich mir eine.

A LETTER WRITTEN BY FRITZ PFEFFER
SAYING GOODBYE TO HIS BELOVED,
CHARLOTTE KALETTA,
15 NOVEMBER 1942, SHORTLY
BEFORE HE GOES INTO HIDING. 'YOUR
LOVE SHALL STRENGTHEN ME', HE
WRITES.

The penetrating peal of the *Westertoren* bells, only a few
dozen metres away, rings out every 15 minutes. At night
the Annexe occupants often hear the terrifying sound of

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?

bombers flying overhead. Tuning in to the illegal radio, they listen to *Radio Oranje* on the BBC and to the German stations. The tension they feel as they listen is intense, especially after D-Day in 1944 when reports come in of the advance of the Allied troops. At this point Otto begins marking their progress on a map.



THE SECRET ANNEXE OCCUPANTS ARE OVERJOYED TO HEAR OF THE ALLIED FORCES LANDING IN NORMANDY ON 6 JUNE 1944. OTTO CHARTS THEIR PROGRESS WITH PINS ON A MAP.

Daily discomforts

—

The Secret Annexe is damp and out of alignment in places. Most of the windows have to be kept closed to avoid discovery, which makes it oppressive and stuffy inside. On weekdays the toilet cannot be flushed during

office hours, and on top of that many of the occupants smoke. A pungent odour hangs in the air of the Secret Annexe, mixed with that of pepper and nutmeg. When a large amount of pepper is being ground downstairs, Anne writes: 'Everyone who comes upstairs greets us with an "ah-CHOO".'^[5] Rats and mice are unavoidable in an old canalside house filled with supplies. The cats Boche and Mouschi are on the prowl every night, but at one point they themselves cause an infestation of fleas: everyone starts itching!

One of the group's main fears is that someone might become seriously ill. Fortunately, their maladies are limited to headaches, bad colds (no coughing or sneezing during the daytime!), flu, Anne's deteriorating eyesight, Auguste's bruised rib and decayed molar and Otto's backache.

To keep fit the group do gymnastics during the first year. They also practise great mental discipline to endure the confinement and silence.

Holidays

—

No birthday is ever passed over in the Secret Annexe, including those of the helpers. Because food and interesting presents are increasingly difficult to come by, the occupants become more and more inventive. Auguste is given a cheese, meat and bread coupon and a pot of jam, for instance, and Peter receives a stock

market game. Mostly they give each other books, food or flowers, and the Frank family write each other poems. In January 1944 Edith is given a 'real mocha cake, pre-war quality'^[6], which Anne's father specifically asks her to mention in her diary. Towards the end of the hiding period, even a rather well-preserved 'serving of coffee'^[7] is given as a present. During the Saint Nicholas festival (5 December) of 1943, everyone was given a present of their own shoe as a joke, sealed with a poem, and for Christmas that same year, Miep bakes a cake with 'Peace 1944' written on top.

BEP VOSKUIJL



1937

Name — **Elisabeth van Wijk-Voskuijl**

Born — **5 July 1919 (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)**

Died — **6 May 1983 (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)**

Pseudonym in *The Diary of a Young Girl* — **Elli Vossen**

Background

Eldest of a large family

—

Elisabeth – usually called Bep – is the oldest daughter of Johannes Voskuijl and Christine Sodenkamp. She is born in Amsterdam and has one brother and six sisters. The family live for a short time in Hilversum but then move back to Amsterdam. They are a religious family: Bep's father is a member of the strict Calvinist Reformed church and her mother is Reformed. All eight children have been baptized and attend Sunday school.

After primary school Bep works several jobs, including as a waitress in a restaurant. Because she wants to advance herself, she takes an evening class in stenography to prepare for a job as an office clerk.

Bep loves dancing and music, and she enjoys going to the cinema to see the latest films. She's a conscientious and considerate young lady who strikes people as rather quiet when she's in a group. But every now and then she can really let her hair down.

Bep comes to work for Otto Frank at Opekta in 1937, and later she also gets to know his family. At eighteen she's the youngest employee in the office. She performs a variety of administrative tasks. Later she works as a secretary in the sales department. She shares an office with Miep, who is ten years older. The atmosphere is relaxed and pleasant. At lunchtime they often go for walks together as they eat their sandwiches. Her father, who is unemployed due to health problems, later becomes Opekta's warehouse supervisor.

In hiding

The youngest helper

—

Bep is the last to be informed about the plans for the Secret Annexe. The others may have had their doubts about involving such a young person in this serious matter (Bep is 22 at the time), since the punishment for helping Jews is severe indeed. When they do entrust Bep with the information, she doesn't let them down: she too agrees to serve as a helper. At that point she cannot fully grasp how much her offer will involve, of course. At home, the only one she can share the stress of the responsibility with is her father, whom Otto Frank has also taken into his confidence. No one else knows!

For two long years, she and Miep do the shopping for the occupants of the Secret Annexe. Bep is responsible for the milk and the bread and is also sent to fetch other household necessities, such as cleaning supplies and clothing. When Anne is close to filling up her diary, she writes that she's going to ask Bep to buy her a new one. Bep's sister occasionally sews garments without knowing who they're for, and Bep then brings them to Anne and Margot. Another sister who works for a pharmaceutical firm is sometimes able to provide Bep with medicines. Bep also signs up for correspondence courses in her own name, including stenography for Margot, Peter and Anne, and later Latin for Margot. She tries to make the group as comfortable as possible. For the 1943 *Sinterklaas* party, for example, she and Miep dream up all sorts of poems and

homemade presents and put them in a large basket as a surprise for the Annexe occupants.

‘[...] she had a very sweet personality, was very generous,[...] and somewhat introverted.’

Cor van Wijk, Bep’s son,
2007^[59]

Bep becomes engaged during the war to Bertus Hulsman, but quickly breaks off the engagement. Because her father is becoming increasingly ill and there sometimes isn’t enough food at home, she often eats lunch and dinner in the Secret Annexe. She gets on well with Anne, even though Margot is closer to her in age. Sometimes Anne was ‘like a sister’^[60] to her, Bep later says. They share an interest in movie stars and often gossip together. Anne is delighted with the postcard of the Dutch royal family in Canada that Bep brings her. Bep spends one night in the Secret Annexe and experiences the tension of life on the other side of the revolving bookcase. She doesn’t sleep a wink.

After discovery

Meeting Queen Juliana

—

When the *Sicherheitsdienst* breaks into the building on the *Prinsengracht* on 4 August 1944, Jo Kleiman quickly sends Bep away. She leaves the office unhindered. Later she returns, and she and Miep go up to the Secret Annexe to see if there are any personal items belonging to their friends that can be saved. In Edith and Otto's bedroom they find Anne's red plaid diary lying on the floor, as well as the loose sheets of paper and old cashbooks they had given Anne to write on. Together they pick up all the papers, and Miep hides them away.

Bep continues to work at Opekta until just after her marriage to Cor van Wijk in May 1946. She maintains contact with Otto Frank, even after his move to Switzerland. Whenever he's in Amsterdam they go out for lunch, and every now and then she visits him and his second wife Fritzi. Otto Frank expresses his gratitude for her help during the war years by occasionally lending money to Bep, who always has trouble making ends meet. Bep and Cor have three sons – Ton, Cor and Joop – and a daughter, Anne-Marie. The little girl is named after Anne Frank.

**'[...] I'm not what you would call a
"woman of the world".'**

Bep Voskuil, 1957^[61]

Bep feels uneasy about the publicity surrounding Anne Frank and her diary, and she prefers not to talk about what happened in the Secret Annexe. But in 1959, when she and Miep attend a film performance and she is introduced to Queen Juliana and Princess Beatrix during the intermission, she admits to feeling ‘a little proud that we were given this great honour’.^[62] She stays in touch with Victor Kugler by mail and visits him once in Toronto.

Bep suffers from kidney disease for which she is hospitalized. Soon after being admitted, she dies there on 6 May 1983, at the age of 64.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



BEP WITH HER MOTHER IN AROUND 1939.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



PORTRAIT OF THE VOSKUIJL FAMILY IN
AROUND 1932. BEP IS SITTING NEXT TO HER
MOTHER.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



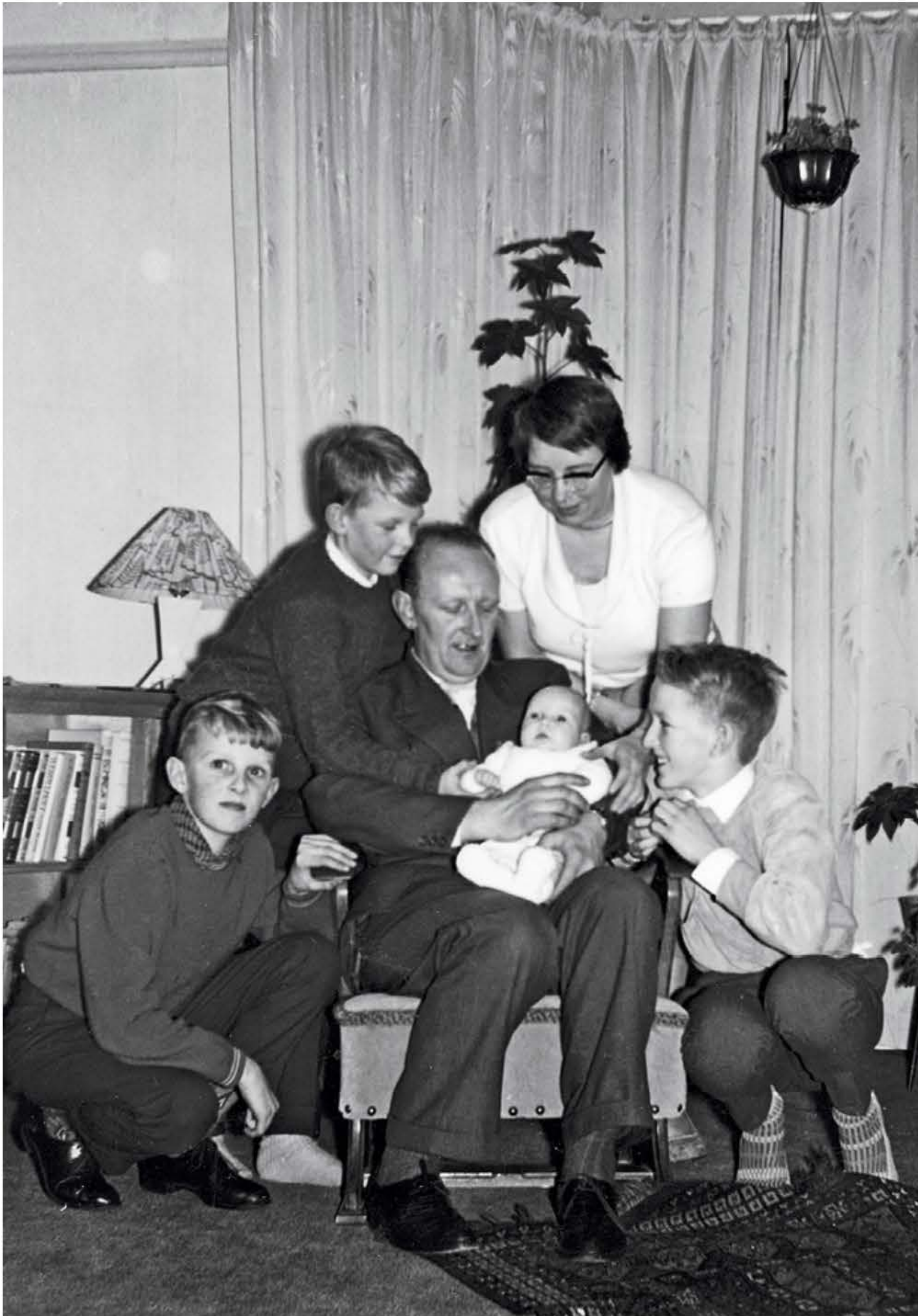
THREE OPEKTA EMPLOYEES: PINE, MIEP AND
BEP (RIGHT), ON THE *PRINSENGRACHT*,
MAY 1941.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



THE WEDDING OF BEP AND COR VAN WIJK, 15 MAY 1946. JOHANNA KLEIMAN IS STANDING ON THE FAR LEFT, OTTO FRANK AND CHARLOTTE KALETTA ARE TO THE LEFT OF THE BRIDAL COUPLE. MIEP AND JAN GIES ARE ON THE FAR RIGHT.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



BEP AND HER FAMILY, 1960.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



LEFT TO RIGHT: BEP'S DAUGHTER ANNE-MARIE, JAN, MIEP AND BEP ON A SUMMER DAY AT BEP'S HOME ON ***GALILEIPLANTSOEN*** IN AMSTERDAM, EARLY SEVENTIES.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



OTTO AND FRITZI ON A VISIT TO BEP, 1978.

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



BEP, AROUND 1979.

MIEP GIES



AROUND 1935

Name — **Hermine Gies-Santrouschitz**

Born — **15 February 1909 (Vienna, Austria)**

Died — **11 January 2010 (Hoorn, The Netherlands)**

Pseudonym in *The Diary of a Young Girl* — **Miep van Santen**

Background

A bicycle ride that changes her life

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



MIEP AT WORK AT OPEKTA, 1936.

OTHERS IN AND AROUND 263

PRINSENGRACHT

Warehouse workers 1942-1944

—

Johannes Voskuijl (in Anne's diary he's given the pseudonym Mr Vossen) works briefly as a furniture salesman and later as a bookkeeper for various companies and private individuals. In around 1935 his activities are greatly restricted due to his illness, he has stomach cancer. He sits at home and worries because he has a large family to support. His oldest daughter, Bep, takes a job at Opekta in 1937, and in 1941 Otto Frank hires the sickly Johannes as warehouse supervisor. Otto entrusts both of them with his plans for going into hiding.

**'So then we came here[...], and
then she[Bep] showed off the
bookcase, and she said, "Look, my
father made this, your granddad
made this," and you know, that
really does something to you.'**

Cor van Wijk, Bep's son,
2007^[70]

Johannes Voskuil constructs the revolving bookcase hiding the entrance to the Secret Annexe. Several of the presents that the Annexe occupants receive from the helpers for the 1942 Sinterklaas party are made by him: an ashtray for Hermann van Pels, a picture frame for Fritz Pfeffer and a pair of bookends for Otto Frank.

In the warehouse, he and the workers are responsible for provisioning and for maintaining the spice mill and the grinding machines. They also make, weigh and pack the herb mixtures. Johannes keeps an eye on things, and every morning he carries out the rubbish that Peter puts in the warehouse the night before. In 1943 his illness takes a turn for the worse and he can no longer work, although he does come for occasional visits. Shortly after the war, on 27 November 1945, Johannes Voskuil passes away.

Willem van Maaren succeeds Johannes Voskuijl as warehouse supervisor in the spring of 1943. With his arrival, the sense of security that the group had with Johannes Voskuijl is gone. According to Anne, Van Maaren is ‘getting suspicious about the Annexe’^[71], and sometimes he even sets traps in the warehouse: he places a pencil on end on the table, for instance, so he can see whether someone has come in after closing time. Obviously he suspects that something is going on in the Secret Annexe.

There are also two temporary warehouse workers employed during the hiding period: Lammert Hartog and Johannes Jacobus de Kok. The latter is an acrobat and a sailor, among other things. It later emerges that he and Van Maaren were also involved in several thefts at Opekta and Gies & Co.

Cats

—

In around 1940, 263 *Prinsengracht* becomes home to two cats who are meant to keep the building free of rodents. When the group moves in to the Secret Annexe, only Boche is left – the ‘warehouse and office cat’, as Anne calls him.^[72] Anne has already had to say good-bye to her own black cat, Moortje, who has found a new home with the neighbours on *Merwedeplein*. She misses Moortje ‘every minute of the day’.^[73] The black cat Mouschi that Peter brings to the Secret Annexe is little consolation at first because Anne is rather

Anne Frank in the Secret Annexe – who was who?



JOHANNES VOSKUIJL, AROUND 1932.